



THE ORATORY

THE ORATORY SCHOOL (OS)
Alcohol Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to give a clear statement to pupils, staff and parents about The Oratory School's attitudes regarding alcohol use, when and by whom it may be consumed, our educational stance regarding alcohol, and sanctions when alcohol is consumed without permission.

The Oratory School is committed to promoting the health of the school community. In today's society, excess alcohol consumption although not acceptable, does nevertheless take place in all age ranges. Peers, the media, schools and the family all play an important role in shaping a child's view on alcohol.

Background

The Catechism of the Catholic Church advises that temperance should be employed by the faithful in regard to those things, the excess of which may be harmful to us: “avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, or medicine.” (CCC par. 2291)

This policy has been authorised by the Head Master, is available to parents and pupils on request, and on the School website. The policy relates to possession and consumption of alcohol and applies to all pupils at The Oratory School irrespective of their age. The policy may also apply at times when a pupil is not in the care of the School. The procedures and sanctions may be adapted as appropriate to meet the policy aims and the circumstances of each case.

Alcohol: means intoxicating liquor of all descriptions (including beer, cider, wine and spirits) and this policy covers obtaining, consuming, and supplying alcohol.

The principles underlying The Oratory School's policy are as follows:

- respect for the Law is fundamental.
- the school has a duty to safeguard the physical and mental wellbeing of all its pupils, and enable them to grow and learn in a healthy environment.
- the school has a duty to inform pupils about the ways in which alcohol can affect their physical and mental state.
- the school has a duty to encourage individuals to think carefully about their attitudes and aspirations, and to develop the self-esteem necessary to enable them to make sensible and independent decisions.

Authority

The person responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy is the Head Master as part of his overall responsibility for education and discipline in the school. The policy has been made after consulting governors, teachers and medical advisers.

Statement of Policy

It is the policy of The Oratory School that through a programme of education and example, it will actively seek to prevent the abuse of alcohol. The aims of this policy include:

- In line with the government we want to reduce alcohol misuse and the harm it causes.
- To obey the law with regards to young people and alcohol consumption.
- To educate young people on the sensible use of alcohol.
- To give clear guidelines/rules on when alcohol consumption, whilst under the School's care, is acceptable.
- To outline the possible consequences of abusing the schools rules on alcohol.

Implementation of Policy

The policy will be implemented as follows:

Prevention through education

Alcohol Education will be taught during Religious Education lessons overseen by the Theology department particularly in Fifth Form lessons. In addition the subject will be taught during Science lessons, tutor periods, and other relevant lessons in a manner appropriate to the pupil's level of understanding. Boys will be taught in order that:

- Boys are enabled to make healthy, informed decisions by increasing knowledge, understanding, challenging attitudes and developing communication and social skills.
- Boys are provided with accurate and age appropriate information about alcohol (be they positive or negative), associated with health risks and the law.
- Boys develop an understanding for those experiencing or likely to experience alcohol misuse.
- We also aim to encourage a sensible attitude towards alcohol, for now and in the future.

Alcohol and the Law

Extracts from the "Licensing Act 2003" Section 149

149 Purchase of alcohol by or on behalf of children

- (1) An individual aged under 18 commits an offence if—
 - (a) he buys or attempts to buy alcohol, or
 - (b) where he is a member of a club—
 - (i) alcohol is supplied to him or to his order by or on behalf of the club, as a result of some act or default of his, or
 - (ii) he attempts to have alcohol supplied to him or to his order by or on behalf of the club.
- (2) But subsection (1) does not apply where the individual buys or attempts to buy the alcohol at the request of—
 - (a) a constable, or
 - (b) a weights and measures inspector,who is acting in the course of his duty.
- (3) A person commits an offence if—
 - (a) he buys or attempts to buy alcohol on behalf of an individual aged under 18, or
 - (b) where he is a member of a club, on behalf of an individual aged under 18 he—
 - (i) makes arrangements whereby alcohol is supplied to him or to his order by or on behalf of the club, or
 - (ii) attempts to make such arrangements.
- (4) A person ("the relevant person") commits an offence if—
 - (a) he buys or attempts to buy alcohol for consumption on relevant premises by an individual aged under 18, or
 - (b) where he is a member of a club—

- (i) by some act or default of his, alcohol is supplied to him, or to his order, by or on behalf of the club for consumption on relevant premises by an individual aged under 18, or
 - (ii) he attempts to have alcohol so supplied for such consumption.
- (5) But subsection (4) does not apply where—
 - (a) the relevant person is aged 18 or over,
 - (b) the individual is aged 16 or 17,
 - (c) the alcohol is beer, wine or cider,
 - (d) its purchase or supply is for consumption at a table meal on relevant premises, and
 - (e) the individual is accompanied at the meal by an individual aged 18 or over.
- (6) Where a person is charged with an offence under subsection (3) or (4) it is a defence that he had no reason to suspect that the individual was aged under 18.
- (7) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction—
 - (a) in the case of an offence under subsection (1), to a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale, and
 - (b) in the case of an offence under subsection (3) or (4), to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

Drinking alcohol whilst under school care

No spirits may ever be consumed by any student regardless of age

A reasonable social use of alcohol, under the supervision of an adult, is to be encouraged at proper times for Sixth Form students. Junior students are not permitted to drink alcohol whilst under the supervision of school. There are dangers, and especially for the young, in our current culture towards alcohol. Unsupervised over-indulgence in alcohol, reliance on it to relieve stress, and the beginnings of addiction, can all be concerns underlying the School's policy and compromise the well-being of the student.

No boy of any age is allowed to bring alcohol into school, irrespective of the intention to consume. Empty bottles or cans will be deemed to have been consumed in school. Boys must not bring the school into disrepute for any reason associated with alcohol, whether or not the boy is in the care of the school at the time.

Consequences of breaking the rules

Each case will vary according to circumstances and all boys should be aware that possession or use of alcohol could lead to expulsion from the School. The levels document in the Behaviour policy gives a guide to the sanctions that will normally apply. Generally the upper limits will apply but the circumstances of each case will be taken into account.

The aim of the School's disciplinary approach to alcohol is to deter individuals who may be tempted to experiment or to persuade others to do so.

Subsequent offences will lead to a higher level of punishment. Repeated suspensions will render a pupil liable to being required to leave the school.

Searches for alcohol

Searches: This is in line with the School's 'Policy on searching and their Possessions' confiscation and reiterated below:

Before any search is undertaken the boy will usually be asked to consent. In seeking consent, the age and maturity of the pupil will be taken into account together with any special needs the pupil may have. Written consent will not usually be required.

- Where the Head Master, Deputy Head Pastoral, Housemaster or an authorised member of staff have reasonable grounds to suspect that a boy may have a prohibited item, consent is not required and the search will be carried out, using reasonable force where appropriate.
- Searches will be carried out only on School premises or, if elsewhere, where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the pupil, for example on a trip or in training settings.
- Alcohol which has been confiscated will be destroyed.

If there is a possibility that a pupil has been using any of the above substances, normal first aid procedures should be followed; he should not be left alone, and the Health Centre Staff should be informed immediately.

Testing

- A pupil caught with alcohol will not need to be tested.
- A pupil obviously intoxicated will not need to be tested.
- A pupil suspected of unauthorised consumption of alcohol may be asked to give a breath test if necessary.

The reason for this policy is:

- to deter breaches of School Rules.
- to identify those involved.
- to absolve those who have been wrongly suspected.
- Informed Consent: The relevant consent to a test is that of the boy rather than the parents, even if the boy is under 16 years of age, provided he is of sufficient maturity and understanding and gives his informed consent in writing. The member of staff leading the investigation will determine whether or not the pupil is able to provide his consent and may request the additional opinion of a medically qualified member of staff.
- Notifying Parents: Reasonable endeavours will be made, before a test is carried out, to notify a parent, guardian or education guardian of the requirement for a breath test and the reasons for that requirement.
- Refusal: If a pupil refuses to be tested he will be asked to say why he has refused. The School will be entitled to draw inferences from his response and general demeanour. If a parent's consent is required and they refuse to consent to their child being tested, the School may draw inferences from the pupil's general demeanour.

Test Result: The School will treat a positive test, although not infallible, as evidence that the pupil has consumed alcohol.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- The policy is a live document, which will be evaluated, refined and updated on a regular basis.
- Incidents involving alcohol will be recorded on MyConcern.
- There will be a continuing programme of INSET as deemed necessary.
- There will be regular pupil input, via questionnaires and discussion in House, in Tutor period etc. Resource materials will continue to be updated and made available to both staff and pupils.

Other Policies/Staff Guidelines, which have relevance to the *Alcohol Policy*, are:

- Drugs Policy
- Smoking Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Policy on Physical Intervention and Restraint
- Policy on Searching Pupils and their Possessions
- Self-Harm Policy
- RSE Policy

Member of Staff responsible: Matthew Fogg (Deputy Head Pastoral)